**Directions: In the following piece, replace the underlined words in the brackets with a more dynamic, interesting, or accurate word choice.**

Recently named among the top 25 non-fiction works of the century, [Richard Wright](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=365)'s [Black Boy](http://www.gradesaver.com/black-boy/) has made a [important] impact on American literature with its strong commentary on the cultural, political, racial, religious, and social issues of 20th century American society. Critics often describe the novel as a [good] example of subtlety-crafted narrative describing Wright's journey into adulthood. Many critics question as to whether the book should be considered pure autobiography, particularly because they doubt the [correctness] of Wright's [memory] as well as because of its [type of] style. But it is agreed that the book [remembers] an important piece of American, as well as African-American, history.

Black Boy celebrates Wright's talent for narrative in its description of the [cruel] South from the black perspective between 1900 and 1945. Perhaps not meant to be a social commentary, Black Boy has nevertheless become an [necessary] piece of African-American literature, dealing with the prejudices of Jim Crow laws and the unity of the black community. Wright [bashes] black culture for not providing a strong [base or starting point] for its race, but places hope in the idea that African-Americans will overcome and defeat racism. Wright is able to [show] being a black male in an oppressive society by selecting symbolic moments from his own life, drawing [self awareness] from his own personal experience.

More true, [transition word here], is that Black Boy is able to [move past] what appears at first glance to be a novel from a limited [way of seeing things]—that of the black male in American society. Rather, Wright discusses a universal existence by discussing religion, intellectual hunger, and basic human [feelings]. Many have even described Wright's analytic style as [metaphysical], with his discussion of ghosts and dreams.

**THIS PART NOT USED IN LESSON**

Published in 1945, Black Boy has become a celebrated document of prejudice in the South and struggle in the North for African Americans, as well as a depiction of Richard Wright's version of the "American Dream." The novel met some opposition, not only because of its violent depiction of the South but also because of its in-depth analysis of Communism. Apparently Part II of the novel—The Horror and the Glory—was edited out of the first edition copy. The Library of America published the later portion of Wright's autobiographical manuscript, entitled "American Hunger," for the first time in 1991. Whereas Part I ended with a tone of optimism, Part II presented the reader with what critic Jerry W. Ward, Jr. describes as "a lamentation, an extended riff on {Wright's} hazy notion that wholeness and decency and redemption lay up North." But perhaps the most intriguing lesson learned in Black Boy is how Richard discovers the power of his own words, his own writing. Whether or not Wright predicted the profound effect the novel would have on the world of American literature and history is betrayed in his closing:

"I would hurl words into this darkness and wait for an echo...I would send other words to tell, to march, to fight, to create a sense of the hunger for life that gnaws in us all, to keep alive in our hearts a sense of the inexpressibly human."

KEY WITH ORIGINAL WORDS

Recently named among the top 25 non-fiction works of the century, [Richard Wright](http://www.gradesaver.com/character.html?character=365)'s [Black Boy](http://www.gradesaver.com/black-boy/) has made a [**significant**] impact on American literature with its strong commentary on the cultural, political, racial, religious, and social issues of 20th century American society. Critics often describe the novel as a [**superb**] example of subtlety-crafted narrative describing Wright's journey into adulthood. Many critics question as to whether the book should be considered pure autobiography, particularly because they doubt the [**accuracy**] of Wright's [**recollection**] as well as because of its [**novelistic**] style. But it is agreed that the book [**monumentalizes**] an important piece of American, as well as African-American, history.

Black Boy celebrates Wright's talent for narrative in its description of the [brutal South from the black perspective between 1900 and 1945. Perhaps not meant to be a social commentary, Black Boy has nevertheless become an integral piece of African-American literature, dealing with the prejudices of Jim Crow laws and the unity of the black community. Wright criticizes black culture for not providing a strong foundation for its race, but place hope in the idea that African-Americans will overcome and defeat racism. Wright is able to depict being a black male in an oppressive society by selecting symbolic moment from his own life, drawing insights from his own personal experience.

More true, however, is that Black Boy is able to transcend what appears at first glance to be a novel from a limited perspective—that of the black male in American society. Rather, Wright discusses a universal existence by discussing religion, intellectual hunger, and basic human emotion. Many have even described Wright's analytic style as metaphysical, with his discussion of ghosts and dreams.

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